entire Pakistan Army including the troops which were earlier guarding Pakistan-Afghanistan border have moved close to the Indo-Pakistan border and taken up positions. Indian Army has taken up a suitable defensive posture to ensure security of our borders. Pakistan Army activities are constantly being monitored and a high state of vigil is being maintained.

Administration of oath to recruits in the Armed Forces

644.SHRIKULDIP NAYYAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a practice still continues in the Armed Forces to administer oath to the recruits on their respective religious books and not the Constitution;

(b) if so, how long has this practice been in existence; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to change it and when?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There is no practice in the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy to administer oath to the recruits on their respective religious books. In the Indian Army, the recruits are required to take their oath of allegiance, swear in the name of God in accordance with the tenets of individual religion to abide by the Constitution of India.

(b) Does not arise in the case of the Indian Air Force and the Navy. For the Indian Army, this is a historical practice.

(c) Does not arise in the case of Indian Air Force and the Navy. There is no proposal to change the practice for the Indian Army.

Class IV employees who died in harness under office of Chief Engineer, Bareilly Zone

645.SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of class IV employees who died in harness since 1995 under the Office of Chief Engineer, Bareilly Zone of the Headquarters Central Command;

(b) whether all the claimants have been appointed on compassionate ground;